

COMMENTARY

PROSPECTS AT THE FAR EASTERN PEACE TABLE

The Thorny Problem of Red China and Formosa

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IF, AS Clausewitz said, war is the pursuit of policy by other means, it follows that the end of a war means a return to the methods of diplomacy, but under new conditions resulting from the ordeal by battle. It is, of course, possible that the end of a war may leave the belligerents in virtually the same positions as they held when it began. But in such a case one side or the other will have failed to achieve an objective of policy by means of force, and this failure can have important effects on the factors of self-confidence, prestige, and resolution involved in the political conflict. After a war the political representatives of the belligerents sit down at the conference table with the bargaining hands, strong or weak, which their soldiers have given them, and each side has in mind the possibility of a renewed resort to "other means" if the political nego-

tiations should fail to produce an agreed peace treaty.

The prospects for either side of achieving aims of policy at a postwar peace conference depend partly on the military situation at the end of the war and partly on the relative degrees of unity and strength of purpose in the two ex-belligerent camps. The military outcome of the struggle is obviously the primary condition of negotiation. Unless there is a complete political disintegration in the ranks of the enemy, it is never possible to dictate terms at the conference table after failure to achieve victory on the field of battle. Only decisive success in military operations enables one side to carry out its will contrary to the will of the other.

In the Korean war the fact that the Allies (by which term it is convenient to designate that section of the United Nations which has actually engaged in armed resistance to aggression in Korea) have refrained from seeking decisive military victory has set very narrow limits to what they can expect to achieve in the forthcoming political conference.

This is a hard fact, however unpleasant it may be. Unfortunately, public opinion in the democracies seems as yet unwilling to recognize that a price has to be paid for failure to win the war in Korea, and expects the diplomats to produce a satisfactory peace

THE United States, G. F. HUDSON here points out, is about to enter for the first time a peace conference following upon a war it has not won. It is a new and strange position for this country to find itself in, and it is in dilemmas such as these that Mr. Hudson's customary sober and incisive analyses of the problems the West will face in the continuing cold war have stood us in very good stead. Mr. Hudson is a fellow of All Souls College at Oxford, and a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY. He is the author of three books on the Western impact on the Far East.

treaty like a rabbit out of a hat after the military commanders have been prevented from providing them with the requisite levers of power. It is, after all, a new experience for both the American and British peoples to go to a peace conference without having previously won the war. Without going further back in their history than 1914, America and Britain have since that date been allies in two great wars at the end of which they were decisively victorious over the enemy. In 1918 Germany had to accept armistice terms which rendered her incapable of further armed resistance, and in 1945 both Germany and Japan were brought to unconditional surrender. If the political sequel in each case was unsatisfactory, it was due to dissensions among the victors, not to any inability to enforce the will of the victors on the vanquished.

But in 1953 the Allies in Korea have to deal with a power against whom they have deliberately refrained from carrying on hostilities in a really damaging form, and who is, as a result, stronger and more self-confident at the end of the contest than it was at the beginning. It is not clear how the Allied governments or the United Nations Assembly can expect to achieve by diplomacy in Korea any objective beyond the recognition of what they have actually succeeded in preserving by force of arms.

THE original purpose of the United Nations intervention in Korea was to assist the South Korean state in repelling the Communist invasion launched against it from the north. If there had never been any other purpose, the Allies could have claimed victory in the war and a thorough vindication of the authority of the United Nations, for the invasion was repelled and the battle line on which the war has ended is for the most part north of the 38th Parallel.

But in October 1950 the United Nations Assembly authorized its military commander to establish control "throughout Korea." This was in accordance with the Assembly's previous assumption of responsibility for a settlement of the "Korean Question." But the

military advance to the Yalu was turned into defeat by Chinese intervention, and this defeat has in the military sphere been accepted as final; at any rate there has been no attempt since then to do more than hold a line close to the 38th Parallel.

Having accepted defeat, the Allies did their best to forget that they had ever said anything about unifying Korea. But President Syngman Rhee, in his unpleasant and provocative way, recently reminded them that the Assembly resolution still stood as the last official statement of Allied war aims, and the world has now been given to understand that the Allied representatives will go to the conference table demanding the unification of Korea—failing which Mr. Dulles has indicated that America will "walk out" of the conference.

But why should Communist China agree to the unification of Korea on any terms but her own? The Communists still control one half of Korea. Why should they give up this substantial asset in exchange for a Korean national unity in which it is very unlikely that they could gain power through constitutional politics after being deprived of their separate military and police forces? If the Communists were to agree to a unification of Korea—and it is quite possible that they will ostensibly do so for tactical purposes—it would only be on conditions they considered sufficient to assure them control of the new amalgamated state. Allied acceptance of such conditions would be equivalent to handing over the whole of Korea to Communist rule—an outcome which some tens of thousands of Allied soldiers have given their lives to avert. If the Allies have failed to occupy, or evict the Chinese army from, North Korea, there does not appear to be any way by which they can establish the rule of a presumably non-Communist unified Korea in Pyongyang, and it would be far better to base policy openly on the assumption of an indefinite continuation of two separate states in the Korean peninsula rather than to proclaim the unification of Korea as an attainable goal.

Barring some unexpected fundamental

change in the international situation, pursuit of this objective by the Allied delegates without a sufficient leverage of power can only lead either to humiliating failure, or else to the purchase of Korean unity by acceptance of conditions likely to have disastrous consequences. Nor would walking out of the conference serve any useful purpose unless it were to be accompanied by a convincing threat of some action which would really alarm Peking. But as long as American bombers do not start hitting Chinese industry it is of no great concern to the Chinese Communist leaders whether American delegates to a conference walk in, out, or sideways.

THE question whether Korea is to be unified or not is, in any case, only of secondary importance to the larger perspective of Far Eastern affairs as they have been affected by the Korean war. Much more serious is the question whether the experience of this war has been such as to deter Communist China from further aggressive acts or whether the winding-up of the Korean war is to be followed shortly by new armed enterprises elsewhere.

This is indeed a question which does not involve the policy of China alone. As long as Chinese power depends in as large a measure as it does on the moral and material support of the Soviet Union, Chinese truculence is liable at any time to be reduced by a genuine turn of Soviet policy into more peaceful courses. But on the assumption that Peking continues to enjoy the cover of the Russian alliance and plentiful supplies of Russian armaments, the Korean experience is unlikely to deter the Chinese Communists from future moves to expand in other directions.

It is true that they have failed to drive the Allies out of Korea and their army has suffered heavy casualties in nearly three years of fighting. But they have saved the North Korean Communist state from extinction, they have gained a substantial military victory which has never been reversed, and their casualties have been negligible in

comparison with the manpower of the most populous nation on earth.

Internally, they have gained enormously from the war in prestige and power. They have been able to rally the Chinese people behind their regime by the appeal to national patriotism. After more than a century of Chinese weakness and humiliation they have achieved a military triumph against a coalition of the great powers of the West, while China's own territory has been miraculously preserved from the operations of war—an outcome which is represented by Communist propaganda as due to the protective might of the "peace camp" and gains corresponding popularity for the policy of alliance with Russia. Nothing succeeds like success, and Mao Tse-tung has ministered to Chinese national pride, self-esteem, and anti-Western resentments in a way which has conveniently distracted attention from the muddles of Communist economic policy and the fact that the Soviet bloc can only give China a fraction of the urgently required economic assistance which, but for Communist truculence, could be obtained from the West.

But if nothing succeeds like success, it is equally true that nothing fails like failure, and the Chinese would have had very different sentiments towards their present rulers if the People's Volunteers had been driven back across the Yalu and if the principal power stations and heavy industrial plants of China had been wrecked by attack from the air. Even if the Communist regime had survived such a catastrophe—which would certainly have put a very severe strain on its stability—it would hardly have had much appetite for further adventures.

But the Allied governments, for reasons which seemed to them sufficient, decided neither to use their air power against China nor to require Chinese evacuation of Korea as the condition for an armistice—which they were in a position to enforce when the Chinese asked for a truce in the summer of 1951. As a result, the Chinese people and their Communist rulers have been encouraged to regard the United States and the other

nations which have taken part in the Korean war as virtually a negligible quantity; the maximum strength of the non-Communist world has apparently been arrayed against China in Korea and has accomplished nothing but a limited holding action. It is logical for the Chinese to assume that, if they move forward somewhere else in the near future, nothing more serious is likely to happen to them than what they have suffered during the last three years, and that the opposition next time will probably be less, and not more, formidable than in Korea.

THE temptation to try something in Southeast Asia is consequently very great. Here is a situation of weakness, a zone of small unstable states or colonial regimes in process of quitting, with large Chinese immigrant communities and local Communist parties for building fifth columns. Here, above all, is the lure of developed natural resources, control of which would be as great an asset for Communist China and the Soviet bloc as denial of them would be a disaster for the free world.

The key to all this is in Indo-China, where the perennial, undecided war, which has been going on since 1947, provides every pretext for intervention, with the Vietnamese government on one side recognized by the Western powers and a rival authority recognized by Moscow and Peking. So far Chinese Communist help to the Communist-controlled Vietminh has been limited to supplies of arms and technical training, but deserters from the Vietminh have reported that Ho Chi-minh has an assurance from Peking that Chinese troops will be sent in, as they were in Korea, if at any time the Vietminh suffer serious reverses. This means that the Vietminh should win either way, for if they are strong enough to win without Chinese reinforcement, they will turn Indo-China Communist by themselves, and if they are not, a Chinese army will come in and do the job for them.

This is the danger which the American, British, and French governments have constantly to bear in mind as they prepare for

the political conference which in October is to discuss the future of Korea and "related issues." The Far Eastern situation will be rendered, not better, but worse, if the only result of a cessation of fighting in Korea, or even an agreed settlement, is to set free China's armed forces for a move to the south.

One thing may be considered certain: that if Chinese forces were to enter Indo-China and overwhelm the French and Bao Dai troops there—and the latter have no margin of strength sufficient for coping with such a reinforcement of the Vietminh—there would be no second campaign on the lines of the United Nations' intervention in Korea. The sixteen nations which have fought in Korea will not be disposed to commit their soldiers a second time to a prolonged and costly war on the mainland of Asia under the same crippling strategic restrictions. With more than 140,000 casualties on the record for Korea, the American people would not be likely to endorse the sending of American infantry to face death in the jungles of Tongking, while the American naval and air arms were forbidden to touch the territory of China.

If China moves again, the Western statesmen will have to make up their minds either to hit China with strategic air power or pull out altogether. Those politicians and diplomats who believe that drastic action should never be taken against China because it might provoke Russian intervention ought to follow out their opinion to its logical conclusion and urge that Southeast Asia be abandoned completely in the event of a Chinese invasion. But if policy-making quarters in Washington, London, and Paris come to the conclusion that such an invasion should be countered by direct warfare against China, then their wisest course will be to convey discreetly to the Peking Government a solemn warning that the territorial immunity China has enjoyed during the Korean war would no longer be granted to her if she committed a second aggression. The best hope of deterring the Chinese Communist leaders from embarking on a new and fatal adventure lies in convincing

them that if they again cross an international frontier they will bring on their country the whole ordeal of modern war.

Such a warning would, of course, fail in its effect if it appeared to Peking as a bluff that could be called. There would have to be a sufficiently manifest unity and determination on the Allied side to carry conviction that the words meant what they said. If the Allies of the Korean war in the months ahead present to China a picture of dissension and vacillation among themselves, it will be taken by China's rulers as implying that they are free to go ahead without excessive risk on any projects of expansion they have in mind.

IT DOES not follow from this situation that the only way of dealing with Communist China is to maintain towards it an attitude of rigid and unyielding antagonism. It is no longer possible to maintain a purely negative position in relation to the Peking government now that the Allies, including the United States, have agreed to negotiate with its representatives at a political conference for a settlement in Korea. The task of Allied diplomacy, whether at this conference or in subsequent contacts, must be to impress on the Chinese Communists the firmness of their resolve to prevent any further aggression, and also to take advantage of any signs that Peking is having second thoughts about the wisdom of extreme policies, or showing desires to loosen its ties with Moscow.

Such normal procedures of diplomacy, however, cannot but raise at every step the question of the international juridical status of the Chinese People's Republic, and particularly of China's seat in the United Nations. Unfortunately this is just the issue on which the policies of the United States and Britain are most sharply divergent, and for that very reason it is the issue on which Communist diplomacy may be expected to concentrate. That the Kremlin regards it as the most favorable opportunity for driving a wedge between the principal Western powers has been strikingly demonstrated by the Soviet note in reply to the Western powers'

request for a foreign ministers' conference to discuss the problems of Germany and Austria. The Soviet note goes out of its way to drag in Asian affairs and declares:

"Responsibility for maintaining peace and international security rests above all, as can be seen from the United Nations Charter, with the five powers: the United States, Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and the Chinese People's Republic. . . . In the discussion of questions concerning measures for decreasing tension in international relations the participation of the Chinese People's Republic is essential. The great Chinese people are united and rallied as never before by the Chinese People's Republic and they now justly demand the reestablishment of their legal rights in all international affairs."

There is a great danger that under this kind of pressure the American and British governments will be forced further and further apart until irreparable damage has been done to their solidarity in the defence of the free world. It is therefore imperative to seek for some course of compromise between the American and British views on the question of Chinese representation in the United Nations. These views are strongly adhered to on both sides and, whatever opinion may be held on their validity, their conflict is a hard fact which must be faced frankly if Anglo-American relations are to avoid a vicious spiral of recrimination and misunderstanding.

The American case is that membership of the United Nations is conditional on conduct in conformity with the principles of the Charter; that no state or government which has been convicted of an act of aggression should be allowed to exercise rights of membership until it has purged its offense and given evidence of an intention not to repeat it; and that it will fatally discredit the United Nations as an institution if an aggressor succeeds in "shooting his way" into it.

The British argue in reply that the Communists have effective control of the mainland of China and that there is no early prospect of their being overthrown; that

governments with effective power should be recognized as representing their states for purposes of international relations; and that, as the United Nations already includes five Communist states whose basic principles of conduct are the same as those of the Chinese People's Republic, its moral integrity cannot really be much affected by the addition of a sixth.

IF, HOWEVER, the controversy is confined to the abstract issue of qualifications for diplomatic recognition or United Nations membership, it is hardly capable of solution, for there is no doubt that there has long been—quite independently of the question of China—a deep difference between American and British approaches to problems of recognition. But the current conflict is primarily a question of practical politics involving a very concrete matter without which the more theoretical aspects of the case would hardly have assumed their present importance. This is the problem of Formosa.

The strongest practical objection to the admission of the Peking government to China's seat in the United Nations is that it would inevitably produce a grave crisis over American support for the Nationalist government in Formosa. Transfer of the United Nations seat would deprive the Nationalist government of all international status; the United Nations as such would have recognized the Communist regime as the *de jure* government of China with a title to all Chinese territory, and would therefore be committed to regarding any aid or protection for the Nationalists in Formosa as an aggression against China. Unless the United States were to repudiate its present policy of support for the Nationalists in Formosa simultaneously with consent to Communist China's representation in the United Nations, the American government would be in a politically untenable position as soon as Communist China brought up the Formosan question. The questions of Formosa and of Chinese representation in the United Nations are thus inseparable as long as Formosa is in international law simply a province of

China—which it has been at any rate since Japan formally renounced sovereignty over it by the terms of the San Francisco peace treaty.

The British government is, and always has been, ready to let the Chinese Communists take Formosa if they can do so without interference. So also apparently was the American government at the beginning of 1950. But the fact that the United States has, even though on its own solitary responsibility and ostensibly only in connection with the Korean war, protected and aided Formosa since the summer of 1950 has created a new situation in which the abandonment of the Nationalists would have very serious moral and political consequences.

Deprived of American support, the Nationalists could not hold out for long against the superior Chinese manpower and Soviet armaments at the disposal of the Peking government. The fall of the island would probably be followed by massacres, executions, and "brain-washings" of the kind which the events of the last three years have led the world to expect from Mao Tse-tung's regime. It goes without saying that such a spectacle would destroy all confidence throughout Asia in America's good faith or constancy in the containment of Communism. Every non-Communist government looking to America for support could in the future expect only to be helped as a matter of temporary convenience and thrown to the wolves as soon as the time came for a deal with the enemy. For this reason, if for no other, it would be disastrous folly simply to "throw in" Formosa as part of a "trade" with Peking.

THERE are, however, much more positive reasons why it is essential for the Allies to preserve Formosa from Communist conquest permanently, and not simply as a measure of momentary precaution. Formosa is the residue of non-Communist China, not a large or populous area in comparison with the vast realm over which Mao Tse-Tung holds sway, but still a piece of Chinese earth under Chinese administration. As such, it

is a challenge to Communism of a kind which has no parallel in relation to the Russian, Czech, or Polish peoples.

Usually, when Communism gains power in a country, the only voices which can still speak in dissent are those of refugees who have found political asylum in a foreign land. But the exile always tends to degenerate politically. Separated from his own people and deprived of all opportunities for responsible political action, he soon comes to inhabit an unreal world of theoretical speculation and unrestrained fancy. If he has the chance to speak to his nation, it is from foreign soil and by favor of a foreign government. If the East Germans are so much more restive under Communist rule than the peoples of other East European satellite countries, it is largely because they can see an alternative in terms of their own national life close before their eyes; they are not dependent on foreigners or on *émigrés* abroad to give them a lead against *Großwühl*.

In the Far East likewise the fact that there still remains an area of non-Communist political and cultural life on Chinese soil means that the Communist monopoly of control over the Chinese people is incomplete, and this gap in the curtain is likely to become more and more embarrassing for the Communists as time goes on, if they continue to be prevented from closing it by the capture of the recalcitrant island.

It is true that the Kuomintang in the last days of its rule on the mainland was deeply demoralized and discredited, but there is evidence of a real regeneration since the transfer to Formosa. The healthy, constructive element in the party, which was formerly overshadowed by the reactionary, militarist wing, has again come to the fore and its recent administrative record in the insular province is promising for the future. Formosa is now a laboratory in which non-Communist solutions for Chinese problems can be worked out with American economic and technical assistance, and insofar as the experiments are successful no Communist brain-washing or censorship will be able en-

tirely to conceal what is achieved from the Chinese people on the mainland.

The insularity of Formosa makes it defensible with only a moderate commitment of American aid. On the other hand, as long as there is no major war, there is no prospect for the near future that the Nationalist government can reconquer the mainland of China. The situation at the moment is a stalemate, with the Russian-aided Communist government holding the mainland and the American-aided Nationalist government holding Formosa. The only basis for "co-existence" without chronic war in the Far East is that this situation should be given regular juridical form by the declaration of Formosa as a separate, independent, sovereign state. It would then become possible for the United Nations to recognize the Peking government as the authority representing China by its effective control of the mainland without giving it a claim to Formosa. The admission of the People's Republic to China's existing seat in the United Nations would be conditional on the simultaneous admission of Formosa (or Taiwan, as it calls itself) as a new member state, and both Moscow and Peking would have to undertake not to use the veto to prevent it.

SUCH a compromise would not indeed be acceptable to that section of American opinion which is opposed on principle to any recognition of Communist China. But it would definitely keep Formosa out of Communist hands and salvage what can be salvaged from the wreck of China. The only alternative is the indefinite continuation of a state of affairs in which no damage would be done to Communist China, but the Western powers be divided so deeply on policy that the Kremlin would have a wonderful opportunity to split them apart. It cannot, of course, be assumed that the Soviet bloc would be prepared to agree to the independence of Formosa as the condition of a settlement; but if they refused, the Peking government would have to stay out of the United Nations. The political position of the United States would,

however, then be much stronger than it is now, for it would have made a reasonable offer of compromise instead of adopting an intransigent, negative attitude towards the whole question.

There has been talk in some quarters of a United Nations trusteeship as a solution for the problem of Formosa. But trusteeship would be quite unsuitable in this case. It is a device applicable to a primitive people or to an area incapable of forming a national state, but not to a government formerly reckoned among the great powers of the world and still ruling territory more populous than Norway. Trusteeship would give Formosa no definite or assured international status; it would destroy the basis of Nationalist authority on the island itself and rally patriotic sentiment to the side of the People's Republic. Independence, on the other hand, would preserve for the Nationalist regime the dignity of a sovereign state with diplomatic representation abroad. It would still be a Chinese state and would be free to reunite with the rest of China whenever political changes on the mainland should make voluntary reunion possible. The Kuomintang would no doubt object even to the idea of Formosan independence as involving surrender of its claim to be the sole legitimate government of all China, but if it seriously

obstructed a settlement otherwise obtainable, it would have to be told that independence was the only political basis on which it could expect to receive continued American support. The Korean war has ended with a *de facto* frontier separating North Korea and Communist China on the one side from South Korea and Formosa on the other. This is the front line of containment in Asia. Already the signature of Mr. Dulles to the mutual defense treaty with South Korea has given notice unequivocally that another attack on South Korea will mean war against the United States. If later on Formosa is given a similar safeguard, there will be one half of Korea and a small piece of China which will have been saved from Communism, and which could not be violently seized without a great war. What political significance these areas may have in the future will depend on what is made of them by their rulers and on the energy, wisdom, and tact with which aid is given to them by the United States.

Now that the guns have stopped firing the contest in East Asia is between ways of life. To turn South Korea and Formosa into "shop-windows" for values alternative to Communism will be no easy task, but it can be done and it must be undertaken if the sacrifices of the Korean war are not to have been made in vain.